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Nixon Sends Up A Rocket

By Peter Lisagor

LOS ANGELES — Californians got a piquant foretaste the past few days of what their political diet will be this Fall.

President Kennedy and his brother Bob, the Attorney General, have decamped after a surprisingly non-political visit.

But their presence was enough to draw fire from former Vice President Richard M. Nixon, now struggling to resurrect his public career as a candidate for governor and still troubled by the old problem of image.

Makes Charges

Nixon accused the Kennedys of being "carpetbaggers" and promised to show them "a thing or two" in November.

Democrats gleefully welcomed Nixon's remark, not only because they thought the reference to the President as a carpetbagger would be generally resented but because they have claimed that Nixon, after 19 years in Washington, is a carpetbagger of sorts himself.

Gov. Edmund G. (Pat) Brown, seeking re-election, ploddingly maintains that Nixon wants the governorship only as a catapult for propelling himself back into the national scene for another crack at Kennedy, despite Nixon's pledge to serve a full four-year term if elected.

The President's visit here coincided with the latest chapter on what to whom about Cuba during the 1960 presidential campaign.

Robert G. Klein, editor of the San Diego Union and Nixon's press secretary during the 1960 campaign, weighed in with his memory of what the Nixon entourage thought

queried and we were told Mr. Kennedy had been informed about the troop training. Others told us President Eisenhower was angry over the disclosure.

In his book, "Six Crises," Nixon said that he had asked Fred Seaton, former Secretary of Interior and a campaign adviser, to check with the White House about whether Kennedy knew of the secret Cuban plans. Seaton's answer was in the affirmative.

Never Was Told

Neither Klein nor Seaton has disclosed who in the White House confirmed their beliefs. But President Kennedy, supported by Allen Dulles, has said he never was told about the invasion plan. Dulles added he thought it was an "honest misunderstanding" by Nixon.

Klein said Dulles' corroboration of the President "surprised" him. The San Diego editor also disclosed, for the first time, that the Nixon party hoped that the beach landing against Fidel Castro would occur before the election.

The defeat of Castro would have been a powerful factor for Richard Nixon," Klein wrote.

The details of the Cuban story will be finally unraveled by the historians — and they are not likely to be of great concern to Californians in the gubernatorial race.

The story, however, suggests the need Nixon and his former associates feel for self-justification.

California Republicans were not overjoyed by the courtesy call President Kennedy paid to his predecessor, Dwight D. Eisenhower, who is vacationing at Palm Desert, near where Mr. Kennedy rested at Palm Springs.

Nixon's supporters expect Ike to campaign vigorously for his former deputy, and don't want to dilute this partisanship with news pictures of Ike and the President consorting familiarly in the desert sun.

And there can be little doubt that the President will be back in California, for one reason or another, to give a boost to Gov. Brown's bid for re-election.

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